

Saint John Vianney
(Priest)
4 August



About Saint Jean-Baptiste-Marie Vianney, Curé of Ars (1786 - 1859)

Saint John Vianney was the son of a peasant farmer, and a slow and unpromising candidate for the priesthood: he was eventually ordained on account of his devoutness rather than any achievement or promise. He had difficulty with his studies.

In 1818 he was sent to be the parish priest of Ars-en-Dombes, an isolated village some distance from Lyon. When Saint John Vianney arrived there, very few people practiced the faith. However, the Curé of Ars was there for the long haul and he stayed there until he died. His parishioners did not want him to leave. He was a noted preacher and a celebrated confessor. His reputation spread and he was so gifted with an insight into his penitents' souls and their futures, that he had to spend up to eighteen hours a day in the confessional, so great was the demand for him as a confessor. People from outside this village also came to Saint John Vianney to confess their sins.

Saint John Vianney was not comfortable with fame or attention. "The Curé refused to sit for a portrait. When the sculptor Cabuchet surreptitiously tried to capture his features in a ball of wax during the catechism, Vianney sternly bounced him out of the church." (The Curé d'Ars Today, by G.W.Rutler, 1988).

The French State recognised his eminence and awarded him the medal of the Légion d'Honneur in 1848. However, he sold it and gave the proceeds to the poor.

He died on 4 August 1859 and is the patron saint of Parish Priests.

What can we learn from Saint John Vianney's life?

There are some people who are told they will never amount to anything. There are also those people who are given tasks as token gestures just for the sake of giving them something to do. These two scenarios explain Saint John Vianney's life. The Bishop who sent him to Ars probably thought that he would send John Vianney there because he wouldn't last long, and it really wasn't that an important a place to worry about. How wrong was he. John Vianney transformed that place though his hard work, prayer, and penance. He also took the assignment given to him with a willing heart and made sure it was going to work.

Let us never give up striving for our goals or dreams. Let us resolve to always tap into the gifts God fully has blessed us with, and forever seek to extend our knowledge and skills and improve in everything we do.

Quote: "It is always springtime in the heart that loves God."

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Collect

Almighty and merciful God,
who made the Priest Saint John Vianney
wonderful in his pastoral zeal,
grant, we pray,
that through his intercession and example
we may in charity win brothers and sisters for Christ
and attain with them eternal glory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 9:35-10:1

The harvest is rich but the labourers are few

Jesus made a tour through all the towns and villages,
teaching in their synagogues,
proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom
and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness.
And when he saw the crowds he felt sorry for them
because they were harassed and dejected,
like sheep without a shepherd.
Then he said to his disciples,
**'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few,
so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest.'**
He summoned his twelve disciples,
and gave them authority over unclean spirits
with power to cast them out
and to cure all kinds of diseases and sickness.

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Antiphon

Blessed is the servant whom the Lord finds watching when he comes. Amen I say to you: He will put that servant in charge of all his property.

Prayer

O Lord,
you chose Saint John Vianney to minister to your people in the town of Ars.
Like him, may we work hard bringing your Gospel to everyone we meet,
so that we turn away from sin and live the Gospel.
Bless our priests Lord,
and guide them so that they will be worthy shepherds of your flock here on earth.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn for the Memorial of Saint John Vianney

Saint John Vianney lived a life
with virtue and humility,
remaining focused on the prize
transforming his community.

So those who wandered from the Lord,
living a life of sin and greed,
confessed to him their grievous sins,
returning to God in their need.

Saint John Vianney laboured in
a harvest where workers were few.
He called upon the Lord for aid,
whereby the workers daily grew.

Like this great Saint may we commit
to serve the Lord with willing heart,
and overcome what hinders us
and in God's harvest play our part.

88.88 LM (O Waly Waly)

Text: Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono

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Music Links to the Scripture Readings

[Here I Am, Lord](#)

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